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Letters to the Editor

You Get What You Pay For

I was shocked and greatly disappointed at the news article March 4 on " 'Generous' Military Pensions." The brief on the first page, in effect, equates the fine men and women in uniform to the level of food stamps or aid to families with dependent children programs. This is a cause of great indignation for all who have served our country in uniform and particularly to those who are currently on the front line of defense of this country.

If you want to reduce the quality of defense to that of the lowest level of our people who receive food stamps, etc., you will, in turn, get that kind of defense to protect your way of life and our country and all that it stands for! The study by the private Center on Budget and Policy Priorities was taken somewhat out of context and did not

take into account the very low pay of the man in uniform nor the deprivation enforced by duties such as separation from families for long periods and constant moving about causing strain on the family budget. We should do everything possible to build up our military and fight the ever-growing threat facing us, and this kind of journalism is detrimental to our country and to its welfare.

You know as well as I "you get what you pay for." If you want defense at the poverty level, it will be totally inadequate to defend our country. Not only must we build up our armed forces to match the threat facing us, but we should cause them to be proud to serve and by positive action on our part, support them.

The CIA recently stated (the Gates Report) that between 1977 and 1983 the Soviets fielded 1,100 ICBMs, more than 700 SLBMs, 300 bombers, 5,000 fighters, about 15,000 tanks and "substantial numbers" of major service combatant ships, ballistic missile submarines and attack submarines. During the same period, the U.S. deployed 135 ICBMs, 390 SLBMs, no bombers, 3,000 fighters, 5,000 tanks and 106 "major warships."

My 40 years in Naval uniform, a tour as Director of Central Intelligence, Director of the Polaris Program and other defense experience tell me that we have to shift to the "positive" side of looking on our military forces as they are standing between us and slavery of Soviet communism.

W.F. RABORN

Vice Admiral, USN (Ret.)

McLean, Va.